
Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods
Date	31 October 2019
Present	Councillor Craghill (Executive Member)

1. Declarations of Interest

The Executive Member was asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests or any prejudicial or discloseable pecuniary interest that they might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

2. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting of the committee held on 20 March 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

3. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

4. Homeless Review 2018/19

The Executive Member received a report on the prevention and relief work, main duty decisions and rough sleeping as well as the activity governed by the Housing Act 1996, the Homelessness Act 2002, The Localism Act 2011 and the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 and the City of York Council's Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023 in respect of the financial year 2018/19.

Tim Carroll, the Service Manager for the Housing Options and Support Team and Denis Southall, Head of Housing, were in attendance to present the report and to respond to questions.

During discussion, officers explained some of the challenges that their team had faced in relation to this aspect of service which included:

- the financial environment in York in terms of wages to housing prices, which makes it harder for people to access affordable housing,
- cuts in funding from central government

- The Homeless Reduction Act 2017 – whilst this had been well-intended and welcome legislation, managing these changes locally had meant added work and the team adapting to a new IT system.

The Executive Member commended the team in their ability to absorb these challenges and noted that the department had worked very hard with all of our partners in the voluntary sector on reducing the numbers of rough sleeping in York. She also noted that many of York's residents were very concerned about this issue and that it was important to assure them that that the housing team were already working hard to address this concern, whilst acknowledging that there is always more that could be done. She was pleased to note that the department had continued to gain funding to help prevent homelessness. The Executive would be considering work on how to help reduce the number of homeless people in York along with other initiatives within the council's budget in July.

Resolved:

- (i) That the Homeless Review report and the progress made by the service be noted.
- (ii) That the priorities and targets for 2019/20 as set out in paragraph 31 of the Homeless Review report, including renaming the 'Preventing Homelessness Together' to 'Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Together' be agreed.
- (iii) That there be a communication with residents outlining how they can help the homeless in York.

Reason: To ensure the council continues to meet the statutory duties under Housing Act 1996 (as amended) and Homeless Reduction Act.

Cllr Craghill, Executive Member

[The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 2.20 pm].